

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

MCPB  
Item # 12  
3/23/95

March 17, 1995

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Richard C. Hawthorne, Chief  
Transportation Planning Division

FROM: John Matthias for the Planning Department, 495-4569  
Transportation Planning Division

SUBJECT: Worksession and Action on the Recommendations of the  
Alternatives Report of the Transitway and High-Occupancy  
Vehicle Network Master Plan

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

The following recommendations outlined below are reflected in the Alternatives Report. Staff recommends that the Planning Board approve the recommendations and specific actions.

1. One transitway alignment is recommended for detailed right-of-way delineation by the Montgomery County Planning Department:
  - \* Georgia Avenue: between the Glenmont Metro station and Olney.
2. Three alignments are recommended for further study as transitways either by other agencies or at some time in the future:
  - \* Bethesda-Tysons Corner: between the Bethesda Metro station and a future transit station at Tysons Corner in Fairfax County, Virginia.
  - \* US 29: between the Silver Spring Metro station and Burtonsville.
  - \* Grosvenor-White Oak: between the Grosvenor Metro station and White Oak (at US 29 and New Hampshire Avenue) via the Wheaton Metro station.

3. Three alignments are recommended for operational improvements to on-street bus service.
4. One long-haul and two spur (connecting a major HOV facility with an activity center) HOV facilities are recommended for further consideration by the State Highway Administration (SHA) or other agencies as noted in the Staff Report.
5. Specific actions have been identified to implement the staff recommendations. They are listed with the finding for each alignment later in the Staff Report.

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **1. PROCESS**

Following the completion of the Issues Report in January 1993, the Planning Department prepared an Alternatives Report. The effort has been assisted by a Citizens Advisory Committee and a Technical Advisory Committee. Both have provided valuable guidance and input to this Report.

On December 15, 1994, staff presented the Draft Alternatives Report to the Planning Board for its approval for a public forum and discussion. Staff held the Public Forum on the Report on February 6. This Forum was recorded by Cable 55 and rebroadcast several times. A videotape of the Forum is available from the Transportation Planning Division. Staff has also presented the recommendations of the Report to:

- \* Montgomery County Civic Federation - February 13
- \* Olney Chamber of Commerce - March 15
- \* Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board - March 21

Staff also attended the March 14 meeting of the Greater Olney Civic Association at which the recommendation to study a busway on Georgia Avenue was informally discussed. A presentation is being scheduled with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Citizens Advisory Board.

### **2. SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

Comments received at these meetings and in writing are presented in Attachment 1 along with the related staff responses. The comments have been organized into general comments and specific comments on each alignment. Attachment 2 contains the written correspondence received as of March 15 and the articles published in the Bethesda Gazette (March 1) and the Washington Post (March 16). Subsequent comments and correspondence, if any, will be provided in an addendum to this Staff Report.

## Understanding the Process and the Report

Many of the questions and comments regarding the Alternatives Report highlight the importance of clarifying what this Report is and what it is not. The Alternatives Report represents the completion of a County-wide transportation demand evaluation. Based on this evaluation and increases in accessibility, staff has identified a limited number of alignments that are appropriate for further consideration and detailed study.

The Alternatives Report is not a project planning study. The regional scope of the analysis prevented many detailed issues from being addressed. Staff recognizes the importance of these issues and the concerns of residents near an alignment recommended for further study. **If there are more detailed studies on the alignments in the future, they will address these issues and concerns.** It may well be that certain issues would make one or more of these alignments too expensive to construct. There may be also be detailed operational considerations that cannot reasonably be overcome.

Furthermore, future studies will also determine the path the alignment will take. The Alternatives Report analysis focused on linking land uses and determining demand between them. While this analysis required specific definition of a route and station locations for each transitway alignment, future studies will examine a range of geographical and technological options to make the recommended connections.

Based on the strong increases in accessibility and demand projections produced by the regional analysis, it is therefore premature to reject any of these alignments at this time.

## Major Issues Raised

The majority of the questions and comments can be grouped in four major areas:

- \* How will these recommendations affect my neighborhood?
- \* Were enough alternatives studied?
- \* Why didn't the study look beyond the year 2010?
- \* How reliable is the model and how appropriate are the data used?

## Potential Neighborhood Impact

This group of issues reflects the appropriate concern of residents regarding the potential impacts the recommended transitways and HOV facilities may have if they are implemented. These are valid concerns which will be addressed during future studies of the recommended facilities before there is a decision to build anything. The Bethesda-Tysons Corner alignment received the

most questions and comments in this group, including one from Councilmember Krahne.

There is a series of significant study processes that must be completed as a capital project for a transportation facility moves forward toward construction. These include a Major Investment Study (MIS), a project planning study, and the design and engineering of the facility. The MIS process and the subsequent project planning studies require that issues of community impact, environmental impact, and cost-effectiveness be addressed. Where there is a potential for impact, mitigation techniques will be evaluated and cost estimates made for their implementation. None of the issues raised appear to be sufficient to warrant deleting the further consideration of transit connections between activity centers and/or rail transit lines.

### Alternatives Studied

The second group relates to whether all possible alternatives were evaluated. Two processes led to the set of alternatives evaluated. The first was the Transportation Network Studies which evaluated a set of alternative alignments and identified a limited number of them for further study. This set formed the basis of the alignments identified in the Issues Report. Additional alignments were added by the Citizens Advisory Committee and by staff.

As the purpose of this planning effort was to identify and delineate additional rights-of-way needed for transitways and HOV facilities, transit supportive measures and operational techniques were not explicitly evaluated.

The alternatives evaluated encompassed all of the reasonable alternatives for transit and HOV facilities within the County and to destinations in adjoining jurisdictions.

### Extent of Projections

The third group includes questions as to why the analysis did not look further into the future. While the year 2010 seems closer and closer as this process moves forward, the regionally accepted forecasts only extended to the year 2010 when this process began. Although the forecasts now go to 2020, the differences between the projections are not sufficient to affect the Report's recommendations.

Further, the reliability of the travel behavior inherent in the model declines as the projections extend further into the future. The position taken in the study was that, if an alignment demonstrates significant increases in accessibility and strong demand levels by 2010, it would continue to do so beyond that time. Staff recognizes that times are changing -- new technologies in terms of travel and communication will affect travel behavior. It would, therefore, be appropriate to review and update the evaluation process every five to ten years.

## Model Reliability

Evaluation processes that rely heavily on computer models create a sense of uneasiness among those not familiar with them. One of the first steps in evaluating the results of a modeling process is to determine if the results appear reasonable; the alignments recommended in this Report for further study appear to make sense. They are along routes that are heavily travelled even today and provide connections to activity centers and/or rail transit lines.

Another reliability check is whether the results are relatively consistent with other previous studies. The recommendations regarding US 29, Georgia Avenue, and Wisconsin Avenue are consistent with the conclusions of other studies. The demand levels for the Georgetown Branch, North Bethesda Transitway, and the Intercounty Connector (ICC) produced by the evaluation process are generally consistent with those from previous studies for those facilities. This consistency provides a level of confidence to the recommendations for which there are no previous studies.

### 3. BACKGROUND OF PROCESS

Five years ago, the Montgomery County Planning Department initiated the planning process leading to the Transitway and HOV Network Master Plan. The two main reasons behind this process were:

- \* The need for additional transportation options, including transitways and HOV lanes to meet future demand.
- \* The hypothesis that vacant land throughout the County was available for transitways.

The resulting first step was the Transportation Network Studies (TNS), completed in 1992. The TNS reaffirmed a paradox of transit planning: development densities necessary to support transit service are in areas where the rights-of-way needed for a transit line are very limited. However, it also identified a number of potentially valuable future transitway alignments to be explored further.

Following the TNS, the Planning Board and County Council included a study of transit right-of-way protection in the FY 92 work program and budget. The Planning Department then initiated work on the Transitway and HOV Network Master Plan. The Master Plan is designed to identify alignments for future transitways and HOV lanes to protect the necessary rights-of-way by placing them on area master plans. The process establishes a County-wide scope and regional perspective rather than one limited to an individual planning area. This broad scope is necessary to identify new paths of transit and HOV demand.

#### 4. WHAT WE DID

The Transitway and HOV Network Master Plan process is somewhat different than that for area master plans. The Alternatives Report is an intermediate step in the development of the Staff Draft Master Plan. That step represents the completion of the transportation demand analysis and evaluation. Specifically, the steps thus far have included:

##### Issues Report (January 1993)

- \* Identified 16 potential alignment corridors to be evaluated for transitway or HOV use.

##### Alternatives Report (January 1995)

- \* Studied and evaluated networks and links including the 16 potential alignment corridors identified in the Issues Report.
- \* Developed and applied state-of-the-art transportation demand modeling techniques.
- \* Determined the alignments that would best serve County-wide accessibility and demand in the year 2010 for transit and carpools.
- \* Developed a set of recommendations for future transitway and HOV facilities and operational improvements.

#### 5. GENERAL FINDINGS

The Alternatives Report identifies several general conclusions regarding future transit and HOV use in Montgomery County. They include:

- \* Transit demand is strongest when connecting an alignment to an existing or planned rail transit line and/or an activity center.
- \* The Georgetown Branch Transitway addresses existing and future needs for east-west travel.
- \* In addition to the Georgetown Branch Transitway, there is a long-term need for high-quality east-west transit service north of the Beltway and south of the ICC.
- \* There are very few unused rights-of-way where alignments are needed to serve existing and future transit needs.
- \* The primary HOV routes on I-270, the Beltway, and I-95 meet both short- and long-term demand for carpool lanes.
- \* Additional demand can be created for primary HOV routes by getting carpools to activity centers more quickly.

## 6. SPECIFIC FINDINGS AND ACTIONS

The Alternatives Report identified a number of alignments where future transitways would increase County-wide accessibility and attract substantial demand and where future HOV lanes would attract a significant number of carpools.

### Georgia Avenue

**Finding:** An exclusive busway along Georgia Avenue between the Glenmont Metro station and Olney has strong potential.

**Action:** The Planning Department should proceed with an engineering study necessary to delineate right-of-way for an exclusive busway along Georgia Avenue between the Glenmont Metro station and Olney. The specified right-of-way would form the basis for a proposed amendment to the Kensington-Wheaton, Aspen Hill, and Olney Master Plans.

### Bethesda-Tysons Corner

**Finding:** A transitway between the Bethesda Metro station and Tysons Corner would constitute an important and well-used link in the regional transportation network.

**Action:** The Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority and the Maryland Department of Transportation should include a transitway between the Bethesda Metro station and Tysons Corner in their future network studies.

### US 29

**Finding:** Analysis reaffirmed conclusions of previous studies: US 29 has a very strong current and future transit demand between the Silver Spring Metro station and Burtonsville.

**Action:** Planning Department staff should work with MCDOT to identify means to serve transit demand more efficiently in the short-term while working toward a long-term solution. Such a solution would address the environmental constraints and community impact that have kept a transitway from being implemented in the past.

### Grosvenor-White Oak

**Finding:** Analysis showed substantial future demand for a transitway between the Grosvenor Metro station and White Oak via the Wheaton Metro station. While the primary east-west transit project is the Georgetown

Branch Transitway, further relief can be provided by an east-west transitway between the Beltway and the ICC. Results indicated that the best location in terms of network connections and supportive development for such a transitway is between the Grosvenor Metro station and White Oak via the Wheaton Metro station.

**Action:** The Grosvenor-White Oak connection is not recommended for further study at this time because:

- \* As most of the land along this alignment has already been developed, there is little right-of-way to be preserved.
- \* There are several transitways in Montgomery County that would have higher priority for transit funds than this alignment.
- \* The construction of a transitway on this alignment would appropriately be an extension of the elevated North Bethesda Transitway; further study of the Grosvenor-White Oak alignment should await operation of the North Bethesda Transitway.

Deferring the placement of this alignment on area master plans would not significantly jeopardize its future construction should additional analysis determine its feasibility. Future County-wide transit studies should include for testing an east-west transitway alignment from the Grosvenor Metro station to White Oak via the Wheaton Metro station.

#### Operational Improvements

**Finding:** Three alignments had relatively high transit demand forecasts but at a lower level than the four recommended transitway alignments:

- \* Randolph Road between the Glenmont and White Flint Metro stations
- \* Norbeck Road between Georgia Avenue and the Rockville Metro station
- \* Veirs Mill Road between the Wheaton and Rockville Metro stations

**Action:** MCDOT should consider operational improvements to existing bus service on the three alignments. The improvements identified in the Alternatives Report include:

- \* Queue jumpers: An extra lane at congested roadway intersections reserved for buses only.



- \* Signal Pre-emption: Buses have devices that can influence traffic signals to reduce travel delays.

- \* Expanded or Enhanced Service: Existing bus routes can operate at shorter headways and/or new routes can be added to provide more transit coverage.

Other improvements not mentioned here could also be implemented.

### High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Facilities

**Finding:** One long-haul and two spur HOV facilities showed significant carpool use and increased County-wide HOV use.

Long Haul:

- \* Cabin John Parkway and Clara Barton Parkway between the Beltway and Washington, D.C.,

Spur:

- \* Colesville Road (US 29) between the Beltway and the Silver Spring CBD,

- \* Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355) between Cedar Lane and Woodmont Avenue in the Bethesda CBD.

Further, the programmed HOV facility on I-270 and those being considered on the Beltway and I-95 provide important potential links for County residents and workers.

**Action:** SHA and the National Park Service should study the implementation of a peak-period HOV facility on the Cabin John Parkway and the Clara Barton Parkway as well as consider the alignment as part of an alternative in the on-going Beltway Major Investment Study (MIS).

Similarly, SHA should study the implementation of peak-period HOV facilities on the two spur facilities and include them in the on-going Beltway MIS. However, it is recognized that significant operational issues would need to be addressed to make these HOV facilities feasible. Because of the strong accessibility increases, demand levels, and benefits to other HOV facilities, SHA should initiate a MIS for I-95 to determine the feasibility of HOV lanes.

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **List of Comments and Staff Responses**

## ***Comments on the Alternatives Report***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>General - Scope</b>		
CAC for Network Master Plan (written at Public Forum); Dan Wilhelm, Douglas Redmond, Edward Wetzlar, Peter Munson, Greater Colesville Citizens Association (written after Public Forum)	* Timeframe of analysis should have been extended.	The travel behavior and other parameters of the model system become more variable the further into the future one projects. Therefore, the timeframe of this study has been limited to 2010.
CAC for Network Master Plan (written at Public Forum); Dan Wilhelm, Douglas Redmond, Edward Wetzlar, Peter Munson, Greater Colesville Citizens Association (written after Public Forum)	* Regional links should have been explored more thoroughly, particularly suburb-to-suburb links.	These links were explored. The initial evaluations included 19 potential alignments divided into 64 segments that intersected at 39 junctions. The possible travel routes provided by these segments and junctions included many suburb-to-suburb commuting routes. Only seven of the 19 potential routes indicated sufficient usage to warrant further study, and only one (Bethesda-Tysons) is a suburb-to-suburb link.
Ed Weisel, Network Master Plan CAC (written at Public Forum); Dan Wilhelm, Douglas Redmond, Edward Wetzlar, Peter Munson, Greater Colesville Citizens Association (written after Public Forum); Richard McCardle, Action Committee for Transit (written after Public Forum)	* Scope of Master Plan should include wider variety of transit measures such as: encourage people to live close to work, cut down high school student parking spaces, tax cuts for employers that provide and organize vanpools, region-wide commuter parking tax, parking fee reduction for HOVs at Metro parking lots.	The focus of the Master Plan is on identifying and delineating additional rights-of-way needed for transitways and HOV facilities. The measures listed are important but are beyond the scope of this effort.
CAC for Network Master Plan (written at Public Forum);	* Results might have been different if different technologies were considered.	The evaluations used in the development of the recommendations considered bus and light rail transit technologies as they are the most promising and are available technologies. Other technologies such as Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) may become operational at a scale where they could be considered in any future updates of this study. Today the innovative technologies are not sufficiently defined to be effectively considered in a study of this nature.

## ***Comments on the Alternatives Report***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
CAC for Network Master Plan (written at Public Forum)	* More consideration should have been given for options taking away lanes for HOV and transitways.	Take-away lanes have generally not been successful in this country. This study focused on new right-of-way needed for new transportation options and was never intended to explore all available transit operational options.
<b>General - Methodology</b>		
Montgomery County Civic Federation (at meeting)	* What traffic congestion growth rate was assumed?	The evaluation was based on comparing alternative situations in 2010, not on a rate of growth of congestion.
Montgomery County Civic Federation (at meeting)	* Why wasn't a zero-growth scenario used?	A zero-growth rate was not assumed as it is not a regionally accepted growth rate.
Montgomery County Civic Federation (at meeting)	* How did the analysis capture changing demographics and travel behavior?	Travel behavior is anticipated to change in the future. The direction, nature, and rate of that change is the subject of continuing discussion and debate. Due in part to this uncertainty the evaluations were not extended beyond 2010.
Montgomery County Civic Federation (at meeting)	* How reliable is the model?	The model is a nationally recognized system that has been calibrated to current conditions. The evaluation is based on a pivot-point approach that focused on the differences between alternative future situations. The model and approach provide an appropriate confidence level for the regional analysis of the Alternatives Report.
Jeanne Goldstein, President, Chevy Chase Valley Citizens Association (written after Public Forum)	* Studies used to predict ridership are methodologically flawed; no accurate projections of the actual number of riders is possible from their use.	There was no attempt to project ridership in the Alternatives Report. Ridership estimates need to be made with much more fine-grain information of land use, sidewalks, and the mode and operating characteristics of the transit service being considered.

## ***Comments on the Alternatives Report***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>General - Other</b>		
<unidentified woman at Public Forum>	* Do any of these improvements affect neighborhood roads?	The model isn't sensitive to traffic on neighborhood streets, but normally when traffic on major highways and arterials is reduced, commuters who have been taking alternative routes through neighborhoods tend to go back to using the more major roadways as they are more direct and faster, now that they are less congested.
CAC for Network Master Plan (written at Public Forum);	* Results from this Master Plan must be integrated with other efforts in the County to improve mobility.	Agree
Jeanne Goldstein, President, Chevy Chase Valley Citizens Association (written after Public Forum)	* Most communities that once had trolleys abandoned them for good reasons, including their inflexibility, cost, noise, and safety considerations.	Although the number of cities with trolleys (now sometimes referred to as "light rail") did diminish during the 1950s and 1960s, there has been a resurgence of this effective form of transit service over the last 15 years. Many cities in the United States and Canada have constructed and are operating light rail transit systems, including Baltimore. Cities that retained their trolley and/or street car systems are adding to them and buying new trolley cars. The new cars are quieter than the historic trolleys of the 1940s. The operations are safer as the transitways are rarely running on the street in mixed-traffic. The signalization at street crossings have improved.
<b>Georgia Avenue Busway</b>		
Ed Weisel, Network Master Plan CAC (written at Public Forum)	* Empirical data to back up current need for Georgia Avenue busway, such as existing park-and-ride lot usage, would be useful.	

## ***Comments on the Alternatives Report***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>Bethesda-Tysons Corner Alignment</b>		
Robert Bowes, Bradley Boulevard Citizens Association (at Public Forum)	* More detail needed about Bethesda/Tysons Corner alignment; is MCPD simply shunting it off to Metro?	Alignment is outside scope of this study and is more appropriate for Metro in their study of the post-103 mile rail transit system.
Robert Bowes, Bradley Boulevard Citizens Association (at Public Forum)	* How will right-of-way be acquired?	There is no available right-of-way between these two areas. The identification of the needed right-of-way and the appropriate funding sources would be among the subjects of future studies.
Robert Bowes, Bradley Boulevard Citizens Association (at Public Forum)	* Will the transit line weave through neighborhoods?	The location of the alignment would be determined through future studies. It is not expected that a future transitway would be planned so as to disrupt existing neighborhoods.
Doug Plank, Springfield Civic Association (at Public Forum)	* Concerned that the mode choice for the Georgetown Branch will determine mode for Bethesda-Tysons Corner.	The mode selected for the Georgetown Branch will be taken into account in future studies of the Bethesda-Tysons alignment. Issues of through-routing, estimated ridership, and construction costs will need to be considered in making that decision.
Doug Plank, Springfield Civic Association (at Public Forum)	* Light rail mode would probably be at-grade and necessitate taking the median at River Road; if underground, may as well use heavy rail technology.	A need for underground construction for a major portion of the alignment will not necessarily eliminate light rail from consideration. The location of right-of-way will be subject to future study; the Alternatives Report identifies strong demand between the two activity centers.
Doug Plank, Springfield Civic Association (at Public Forum)	* Would further study include parking situations? Inadequate study would mean users would park in neighborhoods.	The adequacy of parking at each of the stations would be the subject of future studies. The B-CC Master Plan recommended that a park-and-ride lot be located west of the Beltway.
Betty Ann Krahnke, Montgomery County Councilmember (written after Public Forum)	* Study of Bethesda-Tysons Corner alignment goes against years of careful planning in Bethesda CBD and Bethesda-Chevy Chase.	Alternatives Report is part of long-range planning study endorsed by the General Plan Refinement to study and preserve right-of-way for future transit and HOV alignments.

## ***Comments on the Alternatives Report***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
Betty Ann Krahnke, Montgomery County Councilmember (written after Public Forum)	* Bethesda-Tysons Corner transitway would disrupt existing neighborhoods.	Potential impacts to the existing neighborhoods through the construction and operation of transit service on the Bethesda-Tysons Corner alignment would be carefully considered during future studies. The results of these studies would be taken into account in determining whether or not to proceed further toward implementation.
Dan Wilhelm, Douglas Redmond, Edward Wetzlar, Peter Munson, Greater Colesville Citizens Association (written after Public Forum)	* Need good transit support in Fairfax County for Bethesda-Tysons connection to work.	The evaluation included potential transit improvements by Fairfax County for the Tysons Corner area. If these were not to happen, the line may connect to the West Falls Church Metro station.
Jeanne Goldstein, President, Chevy Chase Valley Citizens Association (written after Public Forum)	* The proposed Silver Spring-Bethesda Transitway would interfere with fire and rescue vehicles coming from the station at Connecticut Avenue and Dunlop Street.	This is not an issue related to this study but it has been passed on to appropriate staff for consideration in the Georgetown Branch Transitway Major Investment Study.
<b>US 29 Transitway</b>		
<unidentified woman at Public Forum>; Mike Dubinsky and Mike Pfetsch, Four Corners CAC (at Public Forum); Dan Wilhelm, Douglas Redmond, Edward Wetzlar, Peter Munson, Greater Colesville Citizens Association (written after Public Forum)	* Would cut-and-cover be used for a transitway on US 29? Could a monorail be used along US 29? Consider elevated rail system for US 29. Bus lane along US 29 won't work: focus on elevated rail.	The selection of the mode and construction technique would be a subject of future studies.
Mike Dubinsky and Mike Pfetsch, Four Corners CAC (at Public Forum)	* Further transit improvements to US 29 corridor should be taken out of existing lanes.	The transitway evaluated was separate from the roadway. It did not consider deleting roadway lanes as two lanes would be needed to provide a double-track operation. The lack of available right-of-way for the transitway is addressed in the Report.

## ***Comments on the Alternatives Report***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
Stuart Rochester, Vice Chair Fairland CAC (written at Public Forum)	* Demand for a transitway on US 29 should not drive land use decisions in Eastern Montgomery County area when there is no feasible way for a transitway to be implemented, particularly south of University Boulevard.	Land use and transit issues are being addressed in current Eastern Montgomery County Master Plan updates. No changes to existing development capacity levels will be made based on the recommendations of this Report.
CAC for Network Master Plan (written at Public Forum)	* Transit solutions should be implemented on US 29 as soon as possible.	Agree
<b>Clara Barton Parkway/Cabin John Parkway</b>		
CAC for Network Master Plan (written at Public Forum)	* National parks such as Clara Barton Parkway should not be used to solve regional transportation problems	Agree, unless they are <u>already being used</u> as a major commuter route and the recommendation can <u>reduce</u> the number of vehicles using the roadway. Clara Barton Parkway is currently used as a peak-direction commuter route each morning and evening. The recommendation of the Alternatives Report is to reduce the number of cars on the parkway while increasing the number of people moved by restricting the traffic in the peak direction to vehicles with two or more people.
<b>Spur HOV Recommendations</b>		
Art Reed, North Woodside and Montgomery Hills Citizens Assoc, Allied Civic Group, Silver Spring/Takoma Traffic Coalition (at Public Forum)	* Will Spur HOV improvements just put more people on the congested Beltway?	More detailed examination will come with implementation study. Spur HOV improvements will be studied only if there are HOV lanes on the Beltway; if implemented they would strengthen the use of the HOV lanes on the Beltway.
John Gilson, District Vice President for Allied Civic Group (at Public Forum)	* The increase of people on the Spur HOV lane on Colesville Road seems wrong.	Putting only one more person in each car on the HOV lane quickly raises the person volume in that lane and reduces the total vehicles in the traffic flow.



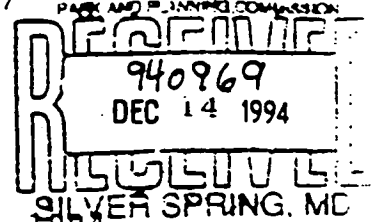
## ***Comments on the Alternatives Report***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
Mike Dubinsky and Mike Pfetsch, Four Corners CAC (at Public Forum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerned about safety if the spur HOV lane on US 29 were implemented as well as the need to ensure continuity of neighborhoods and pedestrian access along and across US 29 between Sligo Creek and Northwest Branch.</li> </ul>	Future studies would examine the issues of operational safety, pedestrian access within communities and along/across US 29.
Mike Dubinsky and Mike Pfetsch, Four Corners CAC (at Public Forum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HOV lanes on US 29 shouldn't be expressway lanes.</li> </ul>	The HOV lanes would be part of the existing roadway and traffic on them would be subject to the existing traffic signals.
Mike Dubinsky and Mike Pfetsch, Four Corners CAC (at Public Forum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HOV improvements to US 29 corridor should be taken out of existing lanes.</li> </ul>	The spur HOV lane evaluated would <u>convert</u> a lane rather than add a lane on US 29. Operational and capacity issues would have to be carefully studied.

## ATTACHMENT 2

### List of Written Comments

	Source	Date
1)	Letter from Stuart Rochester, Vice Chair of Fairland CAC, to MCPB	December 12, 1994
2)	Comments from Network Master Plan CAC to MCPB	December 15, 1994
3)	Letter from Ed Weisel, Network Master Plan CAC member representing Greater Olney Civic Association, to MCPB	December 16, 1994
4)	Letter from Daniel Wilhelm, Douglas Redmond, Edward Wetzlar, and Peter Munson, Greater Colesville Citizens Association	February 3, 1995
5)	Memo from Betty Ann Krahne, County Councilmember, to William Hussmann, Chairman MCPB	February 16, 1995
6)	Article by Christopher Flynn in <u>Bethesda Gazette</u>	March 1, 1995
7)	Letter from Richard McCardle, Co-chairman of Action Committee for Transit	March 1, 1995
8)	Letter from Jeanne Goldstein, President of Chevy Chase Valley Citizens Association	March 14, 1995
9)	Article by Louis Aguilar in <u>Washington Post</u>	March 16, 1995



December 12, 1994

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board Members

RE: Planning Department Transitway/HOV Alternatives Report  
(Route 29 Recommendations)

Dear Planning Board Member:

As you may know, the Issues Report of the Fairland Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee states as one of its foremost concerns that the speculative "transit serviceability" scenario that formed the basis of the 1981 Eastern Montgomery County Master Plan (it was the linchpin for the zoning and land use recommendations in the plan) not be repeated again. By all accounts that plan has been a fiasco: not only did it not produce transit serviceability, but the exponential density increases on which the concept was predicated destroyed the character and scale of existing neighborhoods and overburdened non-transportation as well as transportation infrastructure.

Now, after months of stressing the need to take a more critical and realistic look at transit limitations on Route 29, we are pleased to see that in a report to be presented to you this week, your Transitway/HOV Committee, while pointing to "transit demand" on Route 29, has acknowledged how problematic any HOV or transitway solution might be.

If it were possible to achieve safe, efficient, affordable transit on Route 29, we would be the first to embrace such a system. However we can not accept--nor should you--continuing presumptions about light rail, reversible busway, or other transitway modes on Route 29 that fly in the face of experience and documented obstacles (cited repeatedly by the State Highway Administration) that have no ready solution.

We remain somewhat skeptical, owing partly to the equivocal nature of the report's Route 29 recommendations, that the Committee fully recognizes the extent of the problem. A key question to ask the Committee is how any "new, improved" transit alternative would take Route 29 traffic past the bottlenecks at New Hampshire Avenue and Four Corners, much less Sligo Creek Parkway. We have park-and-ride lots now that are more than half-empty (the one on Greencastle Road is typically used by 2 cars!) precisely because there is no time saved taking a bus along Route 29 that has to

cut back into rush-hour traffic miles before it gets to the Silver Spring Metro station (or even the Beltway). If transit can't get through those chokepoints any better than cars, there will never be more than a "paper" demand for it.

Ask the Committee about the technical, safety, right-of-way, and political constraints to achieving such a route. With regard to the political impediment, the Four Corners community has categorically and successfully opposed any transitway concept that would go south of University Boulevard. What about the fiscal constraints that stymied transportation improvements (both transit and roads) even in the prosperous 80s? What about altered commuter patterns that find more travelers heading east-west or circumferentially rather than north-south?

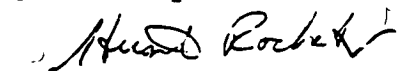
In short, the notion of a Route 29 transitway in our lifetime is fanciful and could be moot if it ever did become feasible. From a planning standpoint, it would be truly irresponsible if, for a second time, such a tenuous proposal was to become the basis for land use and zoning decisions in Fairland. Over a year ago we asked the following of your planners:

As for transit serviceability, its application along US 29 has been hampered by fiscal and other constraints, including political and technical obstacles, that have limited its implementation. These questions will have to be addressed if the reliance on transit is to continue to be a viable strategy. Although there has been a marked increase in transit usage, an increasing percentage of the Fairland residents commute suburb-to-suburb and thus are less likely to use transit options as currently configured.

In light of these issues, the CAC believes there is a need for a fresh evaluation of the existing and planned transportation facilities and the planning assumptions in the 1981 Master Plan.

We believe the draft report makes significant concessions to reason and reality, but we would like to see the conclusions stated less ambiguously and more emphatically. We urge you to examine the Committee's recommendations closely and insure that the smoke-and-mirrors approach to "transit serviceability" on Route 29 is behind us once and for all.

Sincerely,



Stuart Rochester  
Vice Chairman, Fairland  
Master Plan CAC

cc. Bob Marriott

**General Comments to the Planning Board  
from the CAC for Transit and High-Occupancy  
Vehicle Network Master Plan  
12/15/94**

The following are general points the committee would like to bring to the Board's attention as they review the Draft Alternatives Reports.

1. The CAC wishes to thank the Board for the opportunity to have participated in this process.
2. The CAC wishes to acknowledge the cooperation, patience, and helpfulness of staff in answering our many questions.
3. The CAC wishes to draw the Boards attention to the time frame used to project need. Fifteen years may not be an adequate timeframe to justify the need for future transit. The CAC recognizes that the further one goes out, the less reliable the numbers, but 15 years is a very short timeframe when looking at the future transit needs of the County. Our feeling is that by the time the need is known, the R.O.W is not available.
4. The CAC feels that the R.O.W. needed for transit is very dependant on future transit equipment options and related cost. For example, if elevated transit costs come down it may be possible to envision transit in places where current R.O.W. is unavailable and too costly to obtain. Therefore, todays efforts must be revisited periodically to assure they are kept current. The CAC believes the Board should consider putting such a periodic review in motion now, hopefully keeping the model current and data updated will be easier than starting over at a later date.
5. The committee was divided on the importance that should be given to the compatibility/interconnectability of the equipment. We feel, to the extent possible, the equipment should be similar throughout the system.
6. The CAC feels this effort needs to be incorporated into the larger transportation efforts of the County, including transportation management, roads, park and ride lots etc. Mobility is the goal and this is but a piece of the total picture. Who has that responsibility and how it is coordinated, with all the players involved (M-NCPPC, MCDOT, SHA, COG, etc), the CAC believes should be a Board consideration as they review this draft. If we don't get transit to work in Montgomery County it won't work anywhere and we will just continue to push sprawl further and further out.
7. The CAC is particularly interested in the regional aspects of this plan and how it relates to adjacent jurisdictions. Have enough links to adjacent jurisdictions been shown for the long term is a question the CAC feels the Board needs to review.

8. The CAC wishes to point out that the recommendations are obviously driven by the output of the computer models which are beyond the scope of the CAC members to verify. The Board should look to the technical committee for guidance in this area. An advantage of returning in 5 years is to test the accuracy of the model.
9. Members feel stronger consideration should be given to take away lanes for HOV and transit. Some members feel HOV should only be built in take away situations. Further, some members feel the number of hours of HOV usage should also be reviewed for extension.
10. Members feel the Rt. 29 corridor needs immediate attention to implement a fixed guidway solution (stop studying - do something now).
11. Some committee members were concerned that the only long haul HOV chosen is impacting a national park. Some strongly feel national parks should never be used to solve local transportation problems.
12. For this plan to ultimately work the committee feels that the county must place much greater emphasis today on education of our citizens, particularly schoolchildren, as to the need for using public transportation. We would urge the Board to actively work with the Board of Education and others on this education program. It can be done, look at where we have come with recycling in the last few years. This education, hopefully, will lead to building the political will necessary to implement the mobility solutions identified in this draft.

REMARKS OF EDWARD WEISEL TO THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT FUNCTIONAL MASTER PLAN  
FOR TRANSITWAYS AND HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLES  
DECEMBER 15, 1994

4727 Powder House Drive  
Rockville, MD 20853  
December 16, 1994

Maryland National Capital Park  
and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland

Ladies and Gentlemen:

My name is Ed Weisel. I live at 4727 Powder House Drive in Rockville and have served for the past two years as a representative on this CAC for the Greater Olney Civic Association.

This functional master plan for development of transitways and high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) rights of way will, when completed, represent an attempt to deal with one of the most intractable and difficult issues facing American local governments on the eve of the 21st Century: Can we create systems of mass transit, public transit and preferential access for HOVs that are fast, convenient, safe, and (especially) CHEAP enough to persuade us to give up a portion of our private automobile trips and actually begin reducing the congestion and pollution that relentlessly degrade our lives? The only permissible answer to this question is that we must try.

The purposes of our CAC and of the master plan itself are simple and limited: find and save some likely routes for future placement of transitways or HOV lanes. The implications of doing such a transportation system are very profound, ranging through zoning and land use, to the roles and responsibilities of national, state and local governments in our federal system, and even to basic, bedrock popular notions of what constitutes freedom and good citizenship in modern America. Access to our

cars, to go wherever we want to go whenever we want to go there, is very much a part of the fabric of our freedom; limitations on using our cars, no matter how necessary, can never be popular.

The selection of technology to be used in the new transit system may be the single most important decision made by our local government in the next twenty years. I, personally, have become very enamored with the monorail systems, videos of which can be obtained from your staff. Sleek, modern, quiet, quick to construct, environmentally benign, and relatively inexpensive when compared to traditional light rail, roadbuilding, or buses, they deserve your careful consideration.

In the meantime, there are a whole list of small and not-so-small things that might be considered as ways to ameliorate our congestion and pollution:

1. The federal government, indeed all governments in this area need to provide the \$60 per month nontaxable fringe benefit for mass transit use available under the tax code. The feds, in particular, should be leading by example here.

2. High school student parking lots should be closed, or at very least limited to H.O.V. 3. The kids already have their own personal mass transit system. . . .

3. Discounts on title transfer and real estate taxes should be considered for an individual who purchases a home in close proximity to his or her place of work.

4. Special tax expenditures should be considered for business organizations that purchase vans that carry employees from a Metro or other transit stop to a place of work nearby.

5. The issue of a region-wide commuter parking tax should be revisited, particularly for single occupancy vehicles, and even more particularly in areas adequately served by public and/or mass transit.

6. The parking fees at Metro lots could be reconsidered: with SOVs leaving the lot paying a premium and HOVs getting a discount or even free parking.

7. In particular, your attention is directed to Alternate E (Georgia Avenue) in the draft master plan. Alternate E presents an interesting "opportunity," because much of the capital expenditure necessary to consider a demonstration project of upgraded express bus service already has been made. The Glenmont Metro garage is open and provides free parking and already provides a free bus transfer to Wheaton Plaza for anyone wishing to use it. Adequate parking exists near the intersection of



Connecticut and Georgia Avenues; and a park-and-ride lot sits, virtually idle, near the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Route 28. While the computer modeling of transit demand is useful to a point, some hard empirical data might also prove useful.

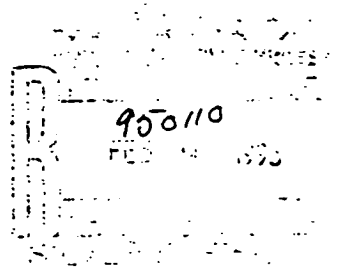
Thank you very much for your attention to my ramblings; I appreciate your patience.

Sincerely,

Edward Weisel

**GREATER COLESVILLE CITIZENS ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 4087  
Colesville, MD 20914



Montgomery County Planning Board  
Attn: Mr. William Hussmann, Chairman  
8787 Georgia Ave  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

February 3, 1995

Re: Draft Transitway/HOV Network Master Plan

Dear Mr. Hussmann:

The Greater Colesville Citizens Association has been following the work on the Transitway/HOV Network Master Plan since its inception. In fact, one of our Board members is a member of the Master Plan CAC. In addition, various GCCA members have been involved in many other transportation-related planning efforts, including the General Plan, White Oak Master Plan, Cloverly Master Plan, upcoming New Hampshire Avenue improvements, upcoming Randolph Road improvements, a SHA study a number of years ago concerning improvements to US 29, both the prior and presently ongoing ICC studies, and the AGP. As such, we feel that we have a good grasp about what needs to be done to our transportation system.

**Alternatives Report**

GCCA is glad to see the Alternative Report eliminate the alignments identified in the Issues Report that had severe environmental impacts, community impacts, or questionable ridership demand. We feel that the four alignments that remain and the existing or planned rail lines form major segments of a realistic long-term transit network.

We want to comment on the scope of this planning effort, but first we will comment on the recommendations in the Alternatives Report.

1. Bethesda-Tysons Corner. We agree that a large number of Montgomery County residents work in Tysons Corner, and that rail from Montgomery County to Tysons Corner is needed. Bethesda appears to be a good Montgomery County hub location to funnel residents from throughout the county to Fairfax County. Although a Fairfax County issue, a similar collection/distribution system is needed in northern Fairfax county. First, many Montgomery County residents work in areas other than Tysons Corner, namely on either side of Virginia Rt 28 (in front of Dulles Airport), and Virginia Rt 267 (Toll Rd). In addition to Montgomery County residents working in northern Fairfax County, an equally large number of northern Fairfax County residents work in Montgomery County. The Fairfax bus/rail system needs to be designed to entice these people to use public transportation.

2. US 29. GCCA agrees with the report that there is a large transit demand on US 29 between Burtonsville and Silver Spring. This demand is evident today by the large number of buses (56 during the peak hour) that go from Eastern Montgomery County to Silver Spring. Except for Four Corners, almost all the present ridership originates at or north of White Oak,

primarily along US 29 and to a lesser extent along New Hampshire Ave. This existing high transit usage would surely increase if the Georgetown Trolley is built. It would further increase if transit to Tysons Corner were built.

GCCA is aware that County DOT is studying an express bus right-of-way down the median of US 29 from White Oak to the Silver Spring Metro. We continue to feel that such a solution is doomed to failure for two reasons: the road width does not exist in many places, and it would require the elimination of left-hand turns along the remainder. We feel that a rail system is the only viable solution. Such a rail system can only be elevated, since a road level system will have the same problems as a dedicated bus lane and an underground system would be too expensive. GCCA feels that the County DOT study should include an elevated system.

3. Grosvenor-White Oak. GCCA feels that this segment has some merit, but only if the North Bethesda Transitway is built, which we understand is in question. We also share the reservations identified in the Alternatives Report about whether a route could be found that does not provide significant impacts on existing communities.

4. Georgia Ave. We agree that this route should be further investigated.

#### **Need for a Global Vision**

One of the conclusions reached in the report was that few right-of-ways exist in the areas investigated. This should not be a surprise since the Transitway/HOV Master Plan is using projections for the year 2010, not very far in the future. The natural conclusion then is that the effort needs to be looking further into the future. We understand that the population, household, and employment projections only recently were developed for 2020. The Alternatives Report indicates that these projections would make little difference on the outcome. The report also indicates that traffic modeling accuracy decreases the more the projection period is in the future. This suggests that an entirely different approach is needed. We will define what we feel this approach should be after another point is made.

We feel that the Master Plan effort is too narrow in focus, in that it only addresses rights-of-way. It does not address what the overall transportation system should look like in the future. We agree with the first two sentences of Chapter 4 that read:

"A major strength of the Transitway and HOV Network Master Plan lies in its scope. By studying a County-wide network in its regional context rather than a single facility restricted by planning area boundaries, it is hoped that relationships between existing, master-planned, and potential facilities can be uncovered and utilized."

GCCA agrees that the present scope is much better than analyzing transportation one planning area at a time. We, however, feel that the effort should have been even broader in scope. The present public transportation system was designed in the 1960's, when the Beltway was just being completed and the vast majority of the jobs were in downtown Washington, D.C. Since the 1960's, many other major roads have been built and the vast majority of the jobs are no longer in downtown D.C. The 1990 census revealed that only 24% of Montgomery County residents work in the District. Over the last several years there have been many news stories about more and more businesses moving out of D.C., and there appears to be no change in this trend. As such, the entire public transportation system needs to be re-designed. The present public transportation system ranges from very difficult to use to impossible to use, except for those working in downtown D.C. Because of such limitations,

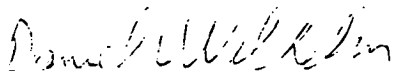
probably less than 15% of the county residents can use public transportation.

GCCA feels that a planning effort along the line of the General Plan should be undertaken. It can and should build upon the General Plan concepts. It, however, needs to address where development should occur, what roads are needed, and lay out a public transportation system that serves most (85% to 90%) of the County residents. Once the vision has been defined, then detailed studies should be undertaken to address the details, such as rights-of-way.

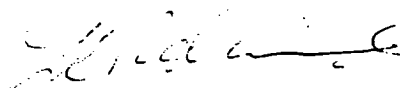
About a year ago GCCA published a paper defining a public transportation network that consisted of a grid system of major transit routes and transfer hubs, with local feeder bus routes. We still feel this concept is the only method to make public transportation viable for most county residents. The recommended routes identified in the Alternatives Report are part of those identified in the GCCA concept.

GCCA feels that its transit grid is part of the final vision, but not the entire vision. We heard many people wanting such a vision as part of the General Plan. We urge the Planning Board, with Council concurrence, to undertake such an effort.

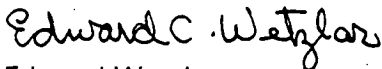
Sincerely,



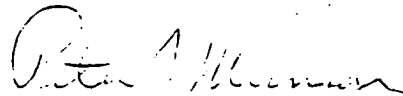
Daniel L. Wilhelm  
Chairman, Planning Committee



Douglas C. Redmond  
GCCA President



Edward Wetzlar  
Chairman, Environment Committee



Peter Munson  
Chairman, Transportation Committee

cc: Council  
County DOT



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

MEMORANDUM

BETTY ANN KRAHNKE

February 16, 1995

TO: *Bill* William Hussmann, Chairman  
Montgomery County Planning Board

FROM: *Betty Ann Krahnke* Betty Ann Krahnke, Councilmember

SUBJECT: Transitway/HOV Master Plan Alternatives Report

I am deeply concerned about the Transitway/HOV Master Plan Alternatives Report recommendation for further study of a Bethesda-Tysons Corner alignment by WMATA as a possible extension of its 103 mile system.

The alignment would directly connect the Bethesda Central Business District with Tysons Corner via Goldsboro Road and River Road to I-495. The alternatives report also examined potential stations at Bradley Boulevard and Arlington Road and at River Road and Goldsboro Road.

This contradicts years of careful planning both in the 1990 Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan and in the 1994 Bethesda Sector Plan. A transit alignment would disrupt existing neighborhoods in Chevy Chase and Bethesda as well as existing and future development in Bethesda. Turning future planning to WMATA implies we support such an alignment and are willing to turn planning and consideration of impacts over to a regional authority.

At the recent Public Forum held by the Transitway/HOV Citizens Advisory Committee, planning staff admitted that the cost of right of way acquisition and construction of a transitway would be quite expensive. I would agree, considering some of the preliminary figures on the Georgetown Branch Transitway.

Cost alone will probably derail WMATA's study of this proposal, however, I do not believe it is appropriate to recommend alignments to other agencies which were never envisioned in recent master plans. I hope the Planning Board will specifically reject this alignment and assign any study by WMATA to the circumferential study underway and any linkage of Bethesda and Tysons to occur as a natural part of a circumferential link to all the radial lines.

58/191

cc: Isiah Leggett  
Graham Norton  
Glenn Orlin

## Local residents react to transitway proposal

by Christopher Flynn  
Staff Writer

Community leaders in Bethesda have begun responding to what they call "bombshell" proposals by the Park and Planning Commission to construct new transitways — including one between Bethesda and Tysons Corner — which would link heavily traveled areas by bus or light rail and ease area traffic.

"I think it's going to hit like a firestorm," said Eileen Pierce, president of the Bradley Boulevard Citizens' Association. The association's board of directors is unanimous in its opposition, saying that the proposal merely duplicates an existing Metro link to East Falls Church.

"It seems to make sense to us to connect the two business centers," said John Matthias, a coordinator in the commission's Transportation Planning division. "If something along this line were built, it would have good ridership."

The proposed transitway would directly connect two areas via

Goldsboro Road and River Road to I-495, with potential stations at Bradley Boulevard and Arlington Road and at River Road and Goldsboro Road.

The potential for transitways has been under study in the county since 1990. The commission released a report in January, outlining various options. It tested 20 or more possible "alignments," or stretches of land for busways or light-rail routes. The report was first discussed at a public forum on Feb. 6.

Routes recommended for further study in the report include: Silver Spring to Burtonsville along Route 29; a route north on Georgia Avenue to Olney; a route linking Bethesda and Silver Spring; and the route from Bethesda to Tysons Corner.

Despite the report and recent forum, many in the community remain unaware of the proposal. "The plan has not yet seen the light of day," said Betty Ann Krahne. (R-Dist. 1) of Chevy

Chase. "Hopefully, seeing the light of day will kill it." Krahne has written letters to inform community leaders and private citizens of the public forum, and has expressed her discontent with the plan in another letter to William Hussman, the chairman of the Montgomery County Planning Board. "The proposal draws a straight line between Bethesda and Tysons Corner," she said. "You can't just draw a line between two demand areas."

Fellow council member, Isiah Leggett, (D-At large) who chairs the council Transportation and Environment Committee, believes that the plan merits further study. "If you look at the long-term benefits, it's worth looking into. [But] unless the state or federal government wants to fund [the transitway], I doubt it will go anywhere."

The proposals are scheduled to be reviewed by the Montgomery County Planning Commission on March 23.

# \* Action Committee for Transit

P.O. Box 7074, Silver Spring, MD 20907

March 1, 1995

Montgomery County Planning Board  
William Hussmann, Chairman  
8787 Georgia Ave.  
Silver Spring, Md. 20910-3760

950201

Dear Mr. Hussmann,

The Action Committee for Transit (ACT) continues to strongly support the goals of the Transitway/HOV Network Master Plan study. Our group endorses the effort to identify future transitway alignments. We are supportive of all four transitway corridors selected in the Alternatives Report. We are, also, happy to note that two of these four alignments connect to the proposed Silver Spring-Bethesda trolley and provide the option of through-routed transit service from the US 29 area to Bethesda or from the Silver Spring to Tysons Corner. With or without through-routing these alignments would work together to provide a high quality Montgomery County transit network, a goal of our organization's membership.

Since two active members of our group are members of the CAC of this study, we have funneled most of our views through them. The primary purpose of this letter is to endorse several of the comments of the Greater Colesville Citizens Association (GCCA) regarding the "Need for a Global Vision." We strongly agree that the Master Plan effort is too narrow in its focus by only addressing rights-of-way. We strongly agree that the County needs to "lay out a public transportation system that serves most (85 to 90%) of the County residents." We also urge the Planning Board, with the Council's concurrence, to undertake an enhanced vision effort.

ACT also agrees with GCCA that the US 29 corridor merits rail transit in the long term. However, we believe the best tested and proven engineering solution may involve a combination of elevated or underground rail with at-grade operation where the right-of-way widens.

Sincerely,

*Richard McArdle* <sup>22</sup>

Richard McArdle  
Co-chairman,  
Action Committee for Transit  
Phone: (301) 588-3294

cc: Derick Berlage, Montgomery County Council President.  
CC: Daniel Wilhelm, Douglas Redmond, Greater Colesville Citizens Association

To: Montgomery County Planning Board 3-14-95  
From: Jeanne Goldstein, President, Cherry Chase Valley Citizens' Assoc.  
Re: Transitways

It is the position of our community that transitways (i.e. for the use of trolleys or trolley-like vehicles):

- 1.) are inflexible as transportation systems.
- 2.) are not cost-effective
- 3.) are unacceptably noisy
- 4.) seriously interfere with other vehicles using the same surface routes or intersecting routes.
- 5.) pose an unacceptably high risk of accidents.

Most communities that once had trolleys abandoned them for the above reasons.

The proposed Georgetown Branch, Bethesda - Silver Spring BEASST would, in addition, interfere with fire and rescue vehicles coming from the station at Conn Ave. and Dunlop St.

Furthermore, the so-called studies used to predict ridership are methodologically flawed. No accurate projections of the actual number of riders is possible from their use. Metro use, which offers far greater flexibility to its passengers, has dropped significantly since the system opened. Taxpayers cannot afford to subsidize transitways in addition to Metro subsidies.



# MONTGOMERY

## WEEKLY

**Classified  
& Home**

# Planners Urge Creating Four Major Transit Corridors

By Louis Aguilar  
Washington Post Staff Writer

A mix of light-rail routes, bus lines and high-occupancy-vehicle lanes should be built along four major traffic corridors in Montgomery County by the year 2010 to prevent complete gridlock, according to a county study.

The Montgomery County Planning Department staff urged the creation of public transportation corridors, called "transit ways," from Howard County through Montgomery to Tyson's Corner in Northern Vir-

ginia. These corridors would link new bus or light-rail routes to existing Metro stations and bus lines.

Although the planning department's report is more a concept than a nuts-and-bolts plan, neighborhood associations already seem inclined to put up serious roadblocks out of fear of new construction projects, environmental damage and heavier development around the busy corridors.

The proposals, and the public's opportunity to comment on them, are just beginning. Next Thursday, the report will be discussed by the county Planning Board, which eventu-

ally will conduct a public hearing on the report. If the plan moves forward, it then would have to go to the County Council for more debate.

The report supports the acquisition of property for future mass transit needs but offers no cost estimates. Instead the planners discuss bus or light-rail options and suggest various locations for them.

The report recommends studying ways to unclog Route 29 from Silver Spring to Burtonsville, and Georgia Avenue from the Glenmont Metro station to Olney. It also suggests creating new road or light-rail links

from Silver Spring to Bethesda and from Bethesda to Tyson's Corner via River Road.

Planners expect Montgomery County to remain the most populous Maryland jurisdiction for the next 25 years. By 2010, the population will increase 22 percent and employment 41 percent, while auto ownership will reach about one car for every licensed driver, they say.

About 1 million vehicles a day now use the Capital Beltway, and lengthy backups on main roads such as Georgia Avenue, Rockville Pike and Route 29 are common. Traffic on the county's three primary east-west

roadways, the Beltway, the East-West Highway and Randolph Road, often is bumper-to-bumper.

Chuck Lapinski, head of the Civic Federation, a coalition of Montgomery neighborhood organizations, said county officials should expect the plan to have opposition.

"In general, I like the fundamental concepts for longer-term application," Lapinski said. "Some of the recommendations are outstanding. But the truth is, I like my car, and I think most people in Washington really need their cars for their jobs."

See TRANSPORT, Page 2, Col. 2



Cristina Puentes Markides, left, says that after 20 years in the United States she still feels

# Firearms, Fear, Crime a Deadly Mix

*Police Cite Rise in Shootings Ruled Self-Defense*

By Avis Thomas-Lester  
Washington Post Staff Writer

For a second, both men froze and stared into the other's eyes—the intruder with the .32-caliber revolver and the Landover homeowner with the 9mm semiautomatic pistol.

"It was like we had a split second to react. I reacted quicker," the homeowner said. "I held the gun up, and I fired. I shot him one or two times as he stood there. Then, as he fell down the stairs, I kept shooting. I shot him about six or seven times, I think."

The homeowner repeatedly has replayed the scene in his head since that confrontation four days before Christmas, one of at least three in the Washington area since December that have

often leaves the victims dead and the shooters emotionally wrecked.

"There is a definite increase in self-defense shootings," said Melanie Shaw, chief of the homicide and narcotics division of the Prince George's County state's attorney's office. "I don't know . . . whether it's because more people are arming themselves in anticipation of something happening or the direct result of people being more and more afraid."

Three incidents illustrate what happens when firearms, fear and crime are combined.

In one case, Ivan Benson, 20, of Woodbridge, was fatally shot by the co-owner of a Woodbridge dry cleaner after he and an accomplice tried to rob the business, police said. They said

The following is a report of how some major bills fared recently in Congress and a record of how local members of Congress voted. NV means Not Voting.

## HOUSE VOTES

### LEGAL COSTS

For-232/Against-193

The House passed a bill requiring one side in a civil suit to pay the other's legal costs under certain circumstances. The bill applies to claims of at least \$50,000 that end up in federal court because the litigants are from different states. About 50,000 civil cases would be affected in a typical year.

Under the bill, a party who refuses to settle a case and later receives a jury award that is lower than the rejected settlement offer must pay the other side's attorney and court costs. Supporters called the bill an incentive to settlement. But opponents said it could close the legal system to persons with valid claims but limited finances.

#### MARYLAND

	Yes	No	NV
Bartlett (R)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cardin (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ehrlich (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gilchrest (R)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No	NV
Hoyer (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mfume (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Morella (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wynn (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### VIRGINIA

	Yes	No	NV
Davis (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moran (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wolf (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bateman (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Billiey (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### LAWYERS' FEES

For-71/Against-347

The House rejected an amendment to legislation on legal costs (above) to restrict lawyers' contingency fees. The measure provided a mechanism for settlement within 60 days of tort suits such as personal injury claims. The plaintiff's lawyer could charge only hourly fees during that period. He then could apply a contingency fee if the bid for quick settlement failed. But the fee could be calculated only on the portion of the eventual judgment that exceeds the rejected settlement.

#### MARYLAND

	Yes	No	NV
Bartlett (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cardin (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ehrlich (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gilchrest (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No	NV
Hoyer (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mfume (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Morella (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wynn (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### VIRGINIA

	Yes	No	NV
Davis (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moran (D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wolf (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bateman (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Billiey (R)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### SHAREHOLDER SUITS

For-325/Against-99

The House passed a bill to curb the growth of class-action suits in which shareholders blame fraud by management or stockbrokers for poor returns. In part, the bill sets a tougher standard for proving fraud and makes it possible for plaintiffs who lose to pay the defendant's legal fees. Supporters said companies often settle "strike suits" to avoid high litigation fees, thus enriching lawyers and "professional plaintiffs" but squandering capital.

#### MARYLAND

	Yes	No	NV
Bartlett (R)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No	NV
Hoyer (D)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### VIRGINIA

	Yes	No	NV
Davis (R)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Transit's Future Debated

TRANSIT, From Page 1

"Frankly, I don't think having [the added public transitways] will mean less traffic," Lapinski said. "This is a very major deal for every neighborhood it affects, and I would anticipate a lot of discussions, if not resistance, from many citizens. . . . We need to stimulate people's thinking about long-term options."

For nearly 20 years, Edward Weisel has been carpooling five days a week from his home in Olney to his job in Federal Triangle. Each year, the traffic has crept more slowly.

"I know most people feel it is their inalienable right to drive everywhere, but how much freedom is there in getting stuck in traffic every day?" he asked.

Weisel is a member of the citizens advisory committee that helped with the transitway report and a strong advocate of public transportation. He realizes the difficult task that lies ahead.

"I consider myself a civic activist, and it is an unwritten rule that you do not criticize other civic activists," Weisel said. "Therefore, I would say my friends have not objected to all new technologies, only certain proposals. I think we can agree on some improvement."

John Matthais, planning coordinator for the county planning department, said early criticisms of the report are based on "misperceptions."